



Testimony Before the Environment Committee, Wednesday, February 10, 2021

Dear Environment Committee Chairs Cohen and Borer, Vice-Chairs Slap and Gresko, Ranking Members Harding and Miner, and distinguished members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our more than 40,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 837, HJ 53 and SB 839.

SB 837 An Act Concerning the Use of Perfluoroalkyl or Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in Class B Firefighting Foam

Sierra Club Connecticut supports SB 837 to stop the use of firefighting foam that contains an intentionally added perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl and create a take back program.

Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl are what is known as “forever chemicals,” meaning their chemical bonds don’t break down and they remain toxic forever. They are found in a variety of consumer products including non-stick pans, paper food packaging, waxes, waterproof and stain-proof clothing and textiles, and firefighting foam. They remain the environment for a very long time, bioaccumulate up the food chain and are found in wildlife and humans. They get into groundwater and contaminate drinking water sources. These chemicals have been linked to kidney, testicular and liver cancers, reproductive disorders, infertility, low birth weights, thyroid disruption, asthma, increases in cholesterol, and resistance to vaccines in children.¹

Alarmingly, these chemicals have been found throughout the country. Millions of Americans are drinking PFAS contaminated drinking water and there is pollution at over 1,400 sites (industrial plants, military bases, airports and fire training sites) in 49 states.² Here in Connecticut, there have been reports of these chemicals being found in wells in Greenwich and in 2019 thousands of gallons of firefighting foam spilled into the Farmington River.

As you continue to develop this proposal, Sierra Club recommends the following:

- The timeline for the ban on training with firefighting foam that contains PFAs should begin immediately;
- Set a full ban on firefighting foam by 2022 since we now have effective alternatives.

HJ 53 Resolution Proposing the Adoption of the Long Island Blue Plan

Sierra Club Connecticut supports HJ 53 to adopt the Long Island Blue Plan, a resource that provides guidance and a collaborative vision for the future of Long Island Sound. The plan provides information and guidance in decision making that will aid stakeholders including those that love the Sound, conservationists, those that use the Sound for recreational and commercial purposes, state and local agencies, and those with development and economic

¹ https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/investigations/hoosick/docs/pfoa_blood_sampling_q_and_a_9_2_16.pdf

² <https://www.northeastern.edu/environmentalhealth/mapping-the-pfas-contamination-crisis/>

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interests. The plan identifies and protects Significant Human Use Area and Ecologically Significant areas. It's a resource the public, regulators, and developers alike can use to help make good decisions about the Sound. This unique approach promotes communication between project proponents and existing users, so that mutually-beneficial outcomes may be found and conflicts can be avoided.

SB 839 An Act Concerning Electronic Documents and Pesticide Regulation in the State
Sierra Club Connecticut supports SB 839 to update pesticide record keeping and to provide public access.

Thank you for your attention to these important issues and consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

Samantha Dynowski, State Director
Sierra Club Connecticut